



**U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement**

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News Release

ICE arrests 125 alien fugitives and immigration violators in Midwest operation *46 of those arrested have criminal convictions*

WASHINGTON, D.C. — U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers arrested 106 illegal alien fugitives and 19 immigration status violators throughout the Midwest during a 10-day initiative.






The operation, which began April 10 and concluded April 19, was carried out by officers of ICE's Detention and Removal Operations (DRO) fugitive operations teams located throughout the Midwest, including: Bloomington, Minn.; Chicago, Ill.; Indianapolis, Ind.; Kansas City, Mo.; Louisville, Ky.; Milwaukee, Wis.; St. Louis, Mo., and Wichita, Kan.

The arrests of the fugitive aliens are the result of ICE's National Fugitive Operations Program (NFOP), which is part of ICE's ongoing effort to restore integrity to the nation's immigration system. The exclusive mission of the initiative is to reduce the number of fugitive aliens in the U.S., which is currently estimated at more than 597,000. These fugitives, or absconders, are foreign nationals who have been ordered removed by a federal immigration judge, but failed to comply with those orders and depart from the United States.

"ICE focuses on removing dangerous criminal aliens from our communities, and on restoring integrity to our nation's legal immigration system," said Julie L. Myers, Assistant Secretary for ICE. "Those who participate in due process but flee when they lose their court cases will be located, apprehended, and removed."

The fugitives arrested during this operation include aliens from the following 28 countries: Cameroon, China, Congo, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyz Republic, Liberia, Lithuania, Mexico, Poland, S. Korea, Romania, Somalia, Tanzania, Thailand, Ukraine, and Yugoslavia.

The following individuals were among those arrested during the operation:

- David Kipeter Sang, 43, a citizen of Kenya, entered the U.S. on a visitor's visa in January 2001. He overstayed his visa, and in 2003 he was convicted of domestic battery and criminal trespassing. ICE officers located him in jail, placed him in removal proceedings, and a federal immigration judge ordered him to leave the United States by Dec. 11, 2003. Sang defied the judge's order. ICE officers arrested him at his home in Olathe, Kan., April 11. He remains in custody pending his removal from the U.S. A mugshot of David Kipeter Sang, a Black man with short dark hair, wearing a patterned shirt. He is standing in front of a height chart that shows he is approximately 60 inches tall.
- Dionicio Alvarez-Godino, 54, a citizen of Mexico, was ordered deported by a federal immigration judge in 1986 but failed to comply. ICE officers arrested him at his Kansas City, Mo., residence earlier this month and deported him April 14. He illegally re-entered the U.S. and was apprehended April 18 in El Paso by the Border Patrol, a division of U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Alvarez-Godino is being criminally prosecuted for re-entry after deportation. A mugshot of Dionicio Alvarez-Godino, a man with dark hair and a mustache, wearing a dark jacket over a white shirt.
- Juan Velasquez-Saldana, 65, a citizen of Mexico, entered the U.S. as a permanent resident in 1990. However, he was arrested in March 2002 after stabbing his landlord in a domestic dispute. He was convicted in Cook County, Ill., of aggravated battery and sentenced to two years in prison. This conviction made him eligible for deportation. Upon his release he was turned over to ICE, ordered removed by a federal immigration judge and deported to Mexico. In March 2006 Velasquez-Saldana illegally re-entered the U.S. The Chicago ICE fugitive team arrested him after receiving a report that he was attempting to fraudulently obtain Social Security retirement benefits. He is currently in custody awaiting removal. A mugshot of Juan Velasquez-Saldana, a man with dark hair, wearing a white shirt. He is standing in front of a height chart that shows he is approximately 63 inches tall.
- Mekonnen Gebregziabher, 47, a citizen of Ethiopia, entered the United States as a refugee in 1991. He was convicted of domestic abuse in Sioux Falls, S.D., and of child abuse in Bismarck, N.D. Consequently, he was ordered deported by a federal immigration judge in 1999. Members of ICE's fugitive team arrested Gebregziabher April 10, 2006 while he was working at a gas station and convenience store in St. Paul, Minn. He is currently in ICE custody pending removal. A mugshot of Mekonnen Gebregziabher, a man with short dark hair, wearing a light blue shirt. He is standing in front of a height chart that shows he is approximately 60 inches tall.
- Enrique Pacheco-Hernandez, 41, a citizen of Mexico, was arrested by ICE officers April 13, 2006 at his Minneapolis residence. A federal immigration judge ordered Pacheco-Hernandez, an illegal alien, to leave the U.S. in 2000, but he failed to do so. He has convictions for domestic assault, drunk driving and has had his driver's license suspended for failing to pay child support. Pacheco-Hernandez was deported to Mexico April 19. A mugshot of Enrique Pacheco-Hernandez, a man with short dark hair, wearing a light blue shirt. He is standing in front of a height chart that shows he is approximately 57 inches tall.

- Alejandro Torres-Rubio, also known as Samuel Rubio-Galvan, 27, a citizen of Mexico, was arrested for being in the U.S. illegally in 1999 and placed in removal proceedings. He failed to appear for his immigration court hearing and was ordered deported in absentia. ICE officers located Torres-Rubio April 13, 2006 at his job in Hopkins, Minn., and arrested him. He also has convictions for assaulting a police officer, aggravated forgery, giving false information to a police officer, and drunk driving. Torres-Rubio was deported to Mexico April 19.



This enforcement action is part of the second phase of the Secure Border Initiative (SBI), a comprehensive multi-year plan launched by the Department of Homeland Security to secure America's borders and reduce illegal migration. Under SBI, Homeland Security seeks to gain operational control of both the northern and southern borders, while re-engineering the detention and removal system to ensure that illegal aliens are removed from the country quickly and efficiently. SBI also involves strong interior enforcement efforts, including enhanced worksite enforcement investigations and intensified efforts to track down and remove illegal aliens inside this country.

Re-entering the United States after having been deported is a felony punishable by up to 20 years in prison.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.